

## IMPROVING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA FOR STUDENTS ACT

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MAY 20, 2013.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of  
the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. KLINE, from the Committee on Education and the Workforce,  
submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1949]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Education and the Workforce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1949) to direct the Secretary of Education to convene the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the Federal level, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act”.

#### SEC. 2. STUDY ON IMPROVEMENTS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

(a) FORMATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMPROVING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall convene the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data (in this Act referred to as the “Advisory Committee”), which shall be comprised of 15 members who represent economically, racially, and geographically diverse populations appointed by the Secretary in consultation with the Commissioner for Education Statistics, including—

(A) individuals representing different sectors of institutions of higher education, including individuals representing undergraduate and graduate education;

(B) experts in the field of higher education policy;

(C) State officials;

- (D) students and other stakeholders from the higher education community;
- (E) representatives from the business community;
- (F) experts in choice in consumer markets;
- (G) privacy experts;
- (H) college and career counselors at secondary schools;
- (I) experts in data policy, collection, and use; and
- (J) experts in labor markets.

(2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary shall appoint the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

(b) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Advisory Committee shall conduct a study examining—

(1) the types of information, including information related to costs of postsecondary education, sources of financial assistance (including Federal student loans), student outcomes, and postgraduation earnings, the Federal Government should collect and report on institutions of higher education to assist students and families in their search for an institution of higher education;

(2) how such information should be collected and reported, including how to disaggregate information on student outcomes by subgroups of students, such as full-time students, part-time students, nontraditional students, first generation college students, students who are veterans, and Federal Pell Grant recipients under subpart 1 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a); and

(3) the ways in which the Federal Government may make such information more readily available to—

(A) students and their families in a format that is easily accessible and understandable, and will aid students and their families in making decisions; and

(B) States, local governments, secondary schools, individual or groups of institutions of higher education, and private-sector entities.

(c) SCOPE OF STUDY.—In conducting the study under this Act, the Advisory Committee shall, at a minimum, examine—

(1) whether the current Federal transparency initiatives on postsecondary education—

(A) are reporting consistent information about individual institutions of higher education across Federal agencies; and

(B) are similar to transparency initiatives on postsecondary education carried out by States, individual or groups of institutions of higher education, or private-sector entities;

(2) whether—

(A) the collection and reporting of postgraduation earnings by the Federal Government is feasible, and if feasible, the options for collecting and reporting such information;

(B) collecting and reporting such information would improve the use of Federal transparency initiatives and ease decisionmaking for students and their families; and

(C) collecting and reporting such information would have an impact on student privacy, and if so, how such impact may be minimized;

(3) whether any other information, including information relating to student outcomes or identified under the review required under subsection (d), should be collected and reported by the Federal Government to improve the utility of such initiatives for students and their families, and if so, how such information may be collected and reported, including whether the information should be disaggregated by subgroups of students;

(4) whether any information currently collected and reported by the Federal Government on institutions of higher education is not useful for students and their families and should not be so collected and reported;

(5) the manner in which the information from Federal transparency initiatives is made available to students and their families, and whether format changes may help the information become more easily understood and widely utilized by students and their families;

(6) any activities being carried out by the Federal Government, States, individual or groups of institutions of higher education, or private-sector entities to help inform students and their families of the availability of Federal transparency initiatives;

(7) the cost to institutions of higher education of reporting to the Federal Government the information that is being collected and reported through Federal transparency initiatives, and how such cost may be minimized; and

(8) the relevant research described in subsection (d).

(d) REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH.—In conducting the study under this Act, the Advisory Committee shall review and consider—

- (1) research and studies, if any, that have been conducted to determine questions most frequently asked by students and families to help inform their search for an institution of higher education;
- (2) the types of information students seek before enrolling in an institution of higher education;
- (3) whether the availability to students and their families of additional information on institutions of higher education will be beneficial or confusing;
- (4) results, if any, that are available from consumer testing of Federal, State, institution of higher education, and private-sector transparency initiatives on postsecondary education that have been made publicly available on or after the date that is 10 years before the date of enactment of this Act; and
- (5) any gaps in the research, studies, and results described in paragraphs (1) and (4) relating to the types of information students seek before enrolling in an institution of higher education.

(e) CONSULTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In conducting the study under this Act, the Advisory Committee shall—

- (A) hold public hearings to consult with parents and students; and
- (B) consult with a broad range of interested parties in higher education, including appropriate researchers, representatives of secondary schools (including college and career counselors) and institutions of higher education from different sectors of such institutions (including undergraduate and graduate education), State administrators, and Federal officials.

(2) CONSULTATION WITH THE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—The Advisory Committee shall consult on a regular basis with the authorizing committees in conducting the study under this Act.

(f) REPORTS TO AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Advisory Committee shall prepare and submit to the authorizing committees and the Secretary an interim report describing the progress made in conducting the study under this Act and any preliminary findings on the topics identified under subsection (c).

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Advisory Committee shall prepare and submit to the authorizing committees and the Secretary a final report on the study, including—

- (i) recommendations for legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions based on findings related to the topics identified under subsection (c); and
- (ii) a summary of the research described in subsection (d).

(B) CONSULTATION WITH NCES.—The Advisory Committee shall consult with the Commissioner of Education Statistics prior to making recommendations under subparagraph (A)(i) with respect to improving the information being collected and reported by the Federal Government on institutions of higher education.

(g) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—The amount necessary to conduct the study under this Act shall be made available from amounts available to the Secretary for administrative expenses of the Department of Education.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this Act:

(1) AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—The term “authorizing committees” has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

(2) FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT.—The term “first generation college student” has the meaning given the term in section 402A(h) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(h)).

(3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), except that such term does not include institutions described in subsection (a)(1)(C) of such section 102.

(4) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “secondary school” has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education.

(6) STATE.—The term “State” has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

(7) STUDENT.—The term “student” includes—

- (A) a prospective student;

- (B) a student enrolled in an institution of higher education;
- (C) a nontraditional student (as defined in section 803(j)(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161c(j)(2))); and
- (D) a veteran (as defined in section 480(c)(1) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(c)(1))) who is a student or prospective student.

#### PURPOSE

H.R. 1949, the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act, directs the Secretary of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the federal level.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

As the Committee on Education and the Workforce continues to evaluate the appropriate role of the federal government in higher education, we are committed to ensuring students have access to relevant and helpful information about colleges and universities.

#### 112TH CONGRESS

##### *Hearings—First session*

On March 9, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled, “The Budget and Policy Proposals of the U.S. Department of Education.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the fiscal year 2012 budget proposal for the Department of Education. Testifying before the committee was the Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

On November 30, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Discussing Ways Institutions Can Streamline Costs and Reduce Tuition.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight a number of innovative practices institutions of higher education are implementing to keep their costs down, thereby limiting tuition increases for students. Testifying before the subcommittee were: Ms. Jane V. Wellman, Executive Director, Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity, and Accountability, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Ronald E. Manahan, President, Grace College and Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana; Mr. Tim Foster, President, Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction, Colorado; and Mr. Jamie P. Merisotis, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lumina Foundation for Education, Indianapolis, Indiana.

##### *Hearings—Second session*

On March 28, 2012, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled “Reviewing the President’s Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Proposal for the U.S. Department of Education.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the fiscal year 2013 budget proposal for the Department of Education. Testifying before the committee was the Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

On July 18, 2012, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled, “Keeping College

Within Reach: Exploring State Efforts to Curb Costs.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight a number of innovative practices occurring at the state level to assist postsecondary institutions in keeping costs affordable and promote accountability of public funds. Testifying before the subcommittee were: Mr. Scott Pattison, Executive Director, National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO), Washington, D.C.; Ms. Teresa Lubbers, Commissioner for Higher Education, State of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana; Dr. Joe May, President, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Mr. Stan Jones, President, Complete College America, Zionsville, Indiana.

On September 20, 2012, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled, “Assessing College Data: Helping to Provide Valuable Information to Students, Institutions, and Taxpayers.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine data being collected by the federal government from institutions of higher education, including requirements put in place during the last reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Testifying before the subcommittee were: Dr. Mark Schneider, Vice President, American Institutes for Research, Washington, D.C.; Dr. James Hallmark, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Texas A&M System, College Station, Texas; Dr. Jose Cruz, Vice President for Higher Education Policy and Practice, The Education Trust, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Tracy Fitzsimmons, President, Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia.

#### 113TH CONGRESS

#### *Hearings*

On April 16, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled, “Keeping College within Reach: The Role of Federal Student Aid Programs.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the federal role in higher education and lay out the pros and cons of shifting the focus of federal student aid programs from enhancing access to improving student outcomes. Testifying before the subcommittee were: Mr. Terry W. Hartle, Senior Vice President, Division of Government and Public Affairs, American Council on Education Washington, D.C.; Ms. Patricia McGuire, President, Trinity Washington University, Washington, D.C.; Mr. Dan Madzelan, Former Employee (Retired), U.S. Department of Education, University Park, Maryland; and Ms. Moriah Miles, State Chair, Minnesota State University Student Association, Mankato, Minnesota.

On April 24, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C. entitled, “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine ways to improve the information provided by the federal government to inform students and families about their postsecondary education options. Testifying before the subcommittee were: Dr. Donald E. Heller, Dean, College of Education, Professor of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan; Mr. Alex Garrido,

Student, Keiser University, Miami, Florida; Dr. Nicole Farmer Hurd, Founder and Executive Director, National College Advising Corps, Carrboro, North Carolina; and Mr. Travis Reindl, Program Director, Postsecondary Education, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Washington, D.C.

#### *Legislative action*

On May 13, 2013, Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN) introduced H.R. 1949, the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act. The bill directs the Secretary of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on the factors students and families want, need, and already consider when choosing a higher education institution.

On May 16, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 1949 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a voice vote. The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 1949:

- Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1949 to include individuals who represent undergraduate and graduate education, college and career counselors at secondary schools, experts in data policy, collection, and use, and experts in labor markets to the list of individuals required to be represented on the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data; ensures individuals on the advisory committee represent economic, racial, and geographically diverse populations; requires the advisory committee to examine information related to the sources of financial assistance, including federal student loans, as part of the required aspects of the study; requires the advisory committee to examine how information regarding student outcomes should be disaggregated for first-generation students; and other conforming and technical changes to the bill. The amendment was adopted by a voice vote.

Below is a summary of H.R. 1949.

#### SUMMARY

The Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act directs the Secretary of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data. The advisory committee is to be comprised of 15 members representing economic, racial, and geographically diverse populations consisting of representatives of higher education institutions, experts in higher education, state officials, students, representatives from the business community, college and career counselors, experts in data policy, experts in labor markets, and experts in consumer choice and privacy.

The advisory committee is required to conduct a study examining the types of information on institutions of higher education the federal government should collect and report, and the best way to make that information available and easily accessible to students and families. In conducting the study, the advisory committee is required to examine whether current federal transparency initiatives are reporting consistent data and whether those efforts are similar to existing federal, state, institutional, and private-sector transparency initiatives. The advisory committee is also required to ex-

plore the value and privacy risk of reporting post-graduation earnings, the best manner in which useful information could be made available to students and families, any activities currently underway to help inform students of the availability of federal transparency initiatives and the sources of federal financial assistance, and the cost to institutions of reporting information to the federal government.

Additionally, the legislation specifically directs the advisory committee to explore opportunities to provide better, more consistent, and effective data to the public, while also identifying data that is no longer useful and should be considered for elimination. The advisory committee is further required to complete a review of relevant research on this topic to inform its study.

In the process of preparing the study, the advisory committee must hold public hearings to consult with parents and students, as well as consult with a broad range of higher education stakeholders and the appropriate authorizing committees in the House of Representatives and Senate. Within 180 days of enactment of the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act, the advisory committee must submit an interim report to the authorizing committees and the Secretary of Education. Within one year of enactment, the advisory committee must submit a final report to the authorizing committees and the secretary. The final report is to include recommendations for legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions made in consultation with the Commissioner of Education Statistics as well as a summary of relevant research.

#### COMMITTEE VIEWS

##### *Introduction*

In recent years, the federal government has taken steps to improve data collection and transparency in higher education. The Higher Education Opportunity Act, the 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, included several provisions to provide students and their families with the information needed to make informed decisions about their postsecondary education opportunities.

For the first time, the law required colleges and universities to make information about price, financial aid, and basic facts and figures, such as demographics and graduation rates, readily available to the public. Students also now have access to a number of products designed to help them learn about their higher education options, including the College Navigator, financial aid shopping sheets, net price calculators, and the College Scorecard.

While many of these initiatives are helpful resources, students still report confusion when researching their postsecondary options and trying to choose an institution that is best for their unique situation. Meanwhile, higher education leaders have raised concerns about the overwhelming amount of federal data and reporting requirements, some of which are duplicative of state and local efforts and may partially contribute to the increase in college costs.

##### *Improving postsecondary education data for students*

To help shine a spotlight on the challenges and opportunities in higher education transparency, Representative Luke Messer (R-IN) introduced H.R. 1949, the Improving Postsecondary Education

Data for Students Act. The legislation directs the Department of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on the factors students and families want, need, and already consider when choosing a higher education institution. The bill directs the advisory committee to issue its recommendations within a year of enactment to assist congressional efforts to reauthorize the Higher Education Act.

The legislation requires the advisory committee to review existing federal, state, institutional, and private-sector transparency initiatives to determine which initiatives are most helpful to students as they research their postsecondary education options. In its review of these existing transparency measures, the advisory committee is tasked with exploring opportunities to provide better, more consistent, and effective data to the public, while identifying data that is outdated, confusing, or obsolete and should be considered for elimination.

During an April 24, 2013 hearing entitled, “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers,” the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training explored opportunities to improve student access to relevant higher education data. At the hearing, Mr. Travis Reindl, Program Director for the Education Division at the National Governors Association, urged Congress to take up such an effort:

Simpler and clearer should be a goal for federal efforts. The upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act provides a prime opportunity for the Congress to review all of the existing dashboards, report cards, and data tools for postsecondary education to determine whether and how they are being used, and if there are opportunities for streamlining or consolidation . . . We encourage a thorough review of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), with the goal of identifying and eliminating surveys and survey items that are rarely used. This would provide needed relief for states and their colleges and universities.<sup>1</sup>

Additional experts testifying to the subcommittee stressed the importance of consumer information in the decision making process. Nicole Hurd, CEO of the National College Advising Corps, works with over 300 staff working every day to counsel low-income and under-represented high school students on college. Mrs. Hurd reflected that, while some fine-tuning may be in order, Congress must move forward in providing more tools for students when considering college:<sup>2</sup>

Think about what choices you can make when you can actually see a school’s graduation rate, loan default rates, median borrowing, grants and scholarships, net costs so our families, especially our low income families can see what this is really going to cost them.

The committee notes there are a number of federal agencies in addition to the Department of Education that collect and publicly

<sup>1</sup> <http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=308347>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



report information on colleges and universities. The committee urges the advisory committee to conduct a comprehensive study of federal transparency initiatives, including, but not limited to, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense. The committee urges the advisory committee staff to meet with the relevant authorizing committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate prior to finalizing its scope of work, holding public hearings, or providing the required interim and final reports.

*Making higher education data relevant for today's students*

Over the last 10 years, the dynamics of higher education have shifted dramatically. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), non-traditional students now make up approximately 70 percent of all undergraduates. This trend is expected to continue in the coming years; in fact, NCES expects enrollments of students older than 25 will rise by 20 percent between 2010 and 2020.<sup>3</sup> Non-traditional students often have different reasons for obtaining a postsecondary education and may use different factors than typical high school graduates in trying to seek out their institution of choice. The Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act requires the advisory committee to examine traditional, non-traditional, and first-generation students, including student veterans, to determine the information each group wants and needs to assist their search for the right college and university. The legislation also directs the advisory committee to solicit feedback from students and families.

In recent years, states, researchers, business leaders, and Members of Congress have discussed the possibility of reporting the salaries of college graduates from public and private universities. At a September 20, 2012 Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training hearing on “Assessing College Data: Helping to Provide Valuable Information to Students, Institutions, and Taxpayers,” Mr. Mark Schneider, Vice President of the American Institutes for Research (AIR), argued, “While improving measures of student learning and student progress are important, ultimately, we need to assess the extent to which labor markets are validating the usefulness of the skills college graduates possess.”<sup>4</sup>

Recently the federal government developed a resource ([www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)) to provide individuals with regional employment and salary information; however, many individuals are interested in gathering more specific post-graduation earnings for individual academic programs. To that end, H.R. 1949 requires the advisory committee to explore the feasibility of reporting post-graduation earnings data and whether that information will improve the usefulness of federal transparency initiatives for students and their families. The legislation also instructs the advisory committee to consider the implications such information will have on student privacy.

*Evaluating current efforts before layering more requirements*

In addition to requiring the advisory committee to determine what additional information is helpful when students are making

<sup>3</sup> <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=98>

<sup>4</sup> <http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=330710>

college financing decisions, H.R. 1949 also requires the advisory committee to determine if there is information that is already being collected that can be eliminated by the Department of Education and/or Congress. Every time Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education Act, it seems to add additional reporting requirements to the law. These statutory requirements lead to additional regulations and informal guidance, both of which hamper efforts to simplify the nation's student aid programs.

During the 2010–2011 academic year, institutions dedicated 826,632 hours and almost \$29 million to filling out IPEDS surveys. This estimate increased to 850,320 hours and almost \$31 million for the 2012–13 academic year.<sup>5</sup> Once the advisory committee determines what information students want to know about individual institutions of higher education, Congress and the department have to be willing to forego such reporting requirements in an effort to streamline the information available to students and their families. In his testimony before the subcommittee, Mr. Schneider summarized the current situation:

The reauthorization of HEA [is] an ideal opportunity for Congress to start cleaning out the IPEDS attic. There's just stuff in there that may have been important at one time or seemed important at one time . . . We need to ask the question, what's the compelling national interest in collecting [some of] the data?<sup>6</sup>

The committee is hopeful the advisory committee will provide thoughtful recommendations about ways to streamline or eliminate reporting requirements that are no longer useful for students and families. The committee notes the past work of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance to review and analyze federal regulations to determine if they are overly burdensome as required under the 2008 reauthorization, and the Government Accountability Office's recent report entitled "Higher Education: Experts Cited a Range of Requirements as Burdensome."<sup>7</sup> The committee urges the advisory committee to expand on this expertise within the framework of what information is helpful to students and families.

#### *Improving the delivery of information for students and families*

The Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act requires the advisory committee to examine the current delivery of information to students and families searching for the institution of higher education that best fits their unique needs. In its efforts, the advisory committee is charged with developing recommendations for improving the delivery of information in a more consistent and understandable medium.

The proliferation of federal transparency initiatives in the past few years has been promising, but improvements can clearly be made. When interviewed, students and families often cite different areas and modes of research than what policy makers in Washington believe they should be examining. Students often rely on in-

<sup>5</sup>National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. IPEDS 2011–2014 Supporting Statement Part A, OMB Paperwork Reduction Act Submission (OMB No. 1850–0582 v.10). Submitted February 2, 2011.

<sup>6</sup><http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=308347>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-13-371>

formation from friends and family or directly from institutions, or simply choose the school that is closest to their home. More often than not, students and families rely on information based on personalized effects, than empirical information provided by the federal government. At the April 24, 2013 Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training hearing, Mr. Alexander Garrido, a student at Keiser University in Miami, FL, stated, “I was not aware of any navigation tools from the Department of Education, which was why my decision was based mostly on my visit and the support of my friends and family.”<sup>8</sup>

Students and families may be deterred from using federal transparency resources due to a variety of reasons, including their exceptional length or complicated and inconsistent delivery. At the same hearing, Dr. Donald Heller, Dean of the College of Education at Michigan State University, summarized the current task before policymakers:

The Internet has greatly helped to democratize access to information. What it has not done as successfully, however, has been to help people get access to the right information to meet their needs. And it is critical that we help prospective students to get the right information in their hands at the necessary times.<sup>9</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act will take an important step toward strengthening higher education transparency and ensuring all students have access to the data they need to choose the right college. The advisory committee’s report will assist the House Committee on Education and the Workforce’s efforts to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. During this process, the committee plans to take a comprehensive approach to maintain and strengthen the information found to be most useful to students, families, and taxpayers, while streamlining the regulatory and reporting burden imposed on colleges and universities.

## SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

### *Section 1. Short title*

States the short title as the “Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act.”

### *Section 2. Study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the federal level*

Directs the Secretary of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to review existing federal, state, institutional, and private-sector transparency initiatives to determine which programs are most helpful to students as they research their postsecondary education options.

<sup>8</sup> <http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=330710>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

The amendments, including the amendment in the nature of a substitute, are explained in the body of this report.

## APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1 requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch. H.R. 1949 directs the Secretary of Education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the federal level.

## UNFUNDED MANDATE STATEMENT

Section 423 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act (as amended by Section 101(a)(2) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, P.L. 104–4) requires a statement of whether the provisions of the reported bill include unfunded mandates. This issue is addressed in the CBO letter.

## EARMARK STATEMENT

H.R. 1949 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House Rule XXI.

## STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause (3)(c) of House Rule XIII, the goal of H.R. 1949 is to provide for market-based interest rates for certain federal student loans. The Committee expects the Department of Education to comply with these provisions and implement the law in accordance with the stated goal.

## DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No provision of H.R. 1949 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

## DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULE MAKINGS

The committee estimates that enacting H.R. 1949 does not specifically direct the completion of any specific rule makings within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 551.

## STATEMENT OF OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause 2(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

## NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND CBO COST ESTIMATE

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and with respect to requirements of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following estimate for H.R. 1949 from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, May 17, 2013.*

Hon. JOHN KLINE,  
*Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1949, the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Justin Humphrey.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

*H.R. 1949—Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act*

H.R. 1949 would authorize the Secretary of Education to use administrative funds to form an advisory committee and produce reports on the types of postsecondary education data that the Department of Education should collect and how that information should be collected and disseminated.

Based on funding levels for similar activities of the Department of Education, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would require about \$1 million in fiscal year 2014, assuming the appropriation of the estimated amounts.

Enacting H.R. 1949 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 1949 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Justin Humphrey. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

## COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

Clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison of the costs that would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 1949. However, clause 3(d)(2)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Con-

gressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act.

